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## **GEORGIA FEDERAL JURY CONVICTS FORMER CHILD ACTING CONSULTANT ON CHILD EXPLOITATION CHARGES**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – A federal jury in Albany, Georgia returned a guilty verdict against Thomas Conrad Lowery, 48, of Americus, Georgia, on January 31, 2008, on all counts of an indictment charging child exploitation offenses, Assistant Attorney General Alice Fisher of the Criminal Division and U.S. Attorney Frank Maxwell Wood of the Middle District of Georgia announced today.

Lowery previously worked as a consultant to juvenile actors, a youth baseball coach, and a computer information specialist with the Sumter County, Georgia Sheriff's Office. He was convicted on a three-count second superseding indictment which charged: one count of transporting a minor with intent to engage in criminal sexual activity, one count of receiving child pornography, and one count of possessing child pornography.

The evidence at trial established that while working as a consultant to aspiring youth actors, Lowery contacted a child actor through the Internet in 2001 and arranged to meet with the child in Los Angeles, CA. Lowery paid the airfare and lodging expenses for the child and a sibling to travel from Florida to Los Angeles. There, Lowery stayed in the same hotel room and engaged in criminal sexual activity with the child in June 2001. The jury also heard evidence about a previous similar incident of molestation, in which Lowery himself transported another child from Georgia to Toronto, Canada in July 2000 in order to engage in criminal sexual activity. Additionally, investigators unearthed images of child pornography on Lowery's work computer at the Sumter County Sheriff's Office. Lowery was thus also convicted of receiving and possessing child pornography between January 2002 and July 2004.

Following the verdict, U.S. District Judge William Sands, who presided over Lowery's trial, ordered Lowery be detained pending sentencing. Lowery was immediately taken into the custody of the U.S. Marshals Service.

At sentencing, Lowery faces up to 15 years in federal prison for transporting the child to Los Angeles, between five years to 15 years for receiving child pornography, and up to five years for possessing child pornography. Each count also carries a fine of up to \$250,000 and a term of supervised release.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Leah McEwen and Trial Attorney Michael Yoon of the of the Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section of the Department's Criminal Division. The case was investigated by the Georgia Bureau of Investigation and the Department of Homeland Security's Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

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